

# Analysis report of procurement standards and procurement praxis in the Czech Republic

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## Introduction

There are several initiatives on green (public) procurement in the Czech Republic. However, they are mostly based on non-governmental initiatives and international projects. The institutional framework of GPP is little developed. As the study of Centre for European Policy Studies concludes, development of the Green Public Procurement in the Czech Republic is well below EU average<sup>1</sup>.

Rules for procurement of furniture and IT equipment have been introduced in 2010. More guidelines were to be followed, but have not been introduced so far (May 2012).

## Current national procurement legislation

The yearly operational costs of the public and state institutions in the Czech Republic represent around 20 % of the Czech GDP (Green Marketing 2007).

Since November 2010 the ministries and the other central governmental institutions will be obliged to follow guidelines implementing green criteria when purchasing IT and furniture. Currently, there is no other legal duty to use green procurement in the Czech Republic or any legally binding standards for its use.

In June 2010, the government of the Czech Republic has approved “New guidelines for implementation of environmental criteria for public procurement” („Nová Pravidla uplatňování environmentálních požadavků při zadávání veřejných zakázek“) by the Governmental Resolution No. 465 prepared by the Ministry of Environment (this is instead of National Action Plan). These guidelines have come into force from 1st of November 2010. The resolution obliges the ministries and other central governmental offices to follow detailed methodologies for the purchase of furniture and office IT technologies including the environmental criteria into the procurement process. The other public institutions are not obliged but only recommended to follow these methodologies. For the other priority areas of public procurement, further methodologies are

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<sup>1</sup> CEPS 2012. The Uptake of Green Public Procurement in the EU27. <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/gpp/pdf/CEPS-CoE-GPP%20MAIN%20REPORT.pdf>

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planned to be developed. Until then the products with ecolabels are recommended to be purchased for all the public institutions.

Generally, the public procurement in the Czech Republic is regulated by the Act No. 137/2006, and the related decrees. When launching public tender, the act allows setting technical requirements including impacts on the environment. It also allows for setting such requirements by referring to the requirements of the national, European or international eco- labeling systems. However, it must be also possible to prove fulfilment of such requirements by other appropriate means, such as technical documentation of the producer.

The Action plan of the State program on environmental education and public promotion in the Czech Republic for 2010 - 2012 (set by governmental decision No. 1302 from 19<sup>th</sup> October 2009) assumes gradual implementation of the environmentally friendly operation of the offices and state institutions. The main aims relevant to Green (Public) Procurement set in the plan are:

- To ensure that public administration employees have environmental knowledge and are applying this knowledge within their organizations
- To increase the number of business that follows environmental principles and implement voluntary environmental instruments, including environmental training.

Requirements of the Directive 2009/33/EC on the promotion of clean and energy-efficient road transport vehicles have been implemented in the Czech Republic in the Act on public tenders (137/2006 Coll.) as article §46a, which states that in case of public tenders for vehicles of categories N1, N2, N3, M1, M2 a M3, the tendered must set specific technical conditions, which reflect energy and ecologic operational impacts. These impacts are energy consumption, CO2 emissions, and emissions of NOx, NMHC and particles. Specific technical conditions are then defined in the implementing legal document, which is the ordinance of the ministry of regional development no. 162/2011 Sb. valid from 6. 7. 2011

Furthermore, there is the government decree no. 1592/2008 Coll. Programme of renewal of the vehicle fleet of public administration with eco-friendly vehicles („Program obměny vozového parku veřejné správy za ‘ekologicky přátelská’ vozidla“). The aim of the programme is to make sure that the share of eco-friendly vehicles on total car fleet used by public administration reaches at least 25 % in 1. 1. 2014. The definition of an eco-friendly vehicle is given in a background material of Ministry of Environment.

### Current national / regional practice

In the Czech Republic, the concept of green procurement appeared for the first time only around the Year 2000. One of the first activities was the project „Sparing Paperwork“ („Šetrné papírování“), led by NGO Arnika which aimed to limit unnecessary paper use and support of recycling. In 2002 Network of ecological advisory centres STEP published an information brochure „Buy green“ („Nakupujte zeleně“). Within the projects „Green office“ („Zelená kancelář“) and Kompas web sites to promote green procurement were created,

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where basic rules and criteria for the green procurement were recommended.

In 2007 environmental NGO Veronica has published the book Standards of Green Office (“Standardy zeleného úřadování”), which is recommending standards for implementation of green public procurement in offices.

CENIA, the Czech Environmental Information Agency published several leaflets pertinent to green procurement. The entitled Green Procurement (“Zelené nakupování”) informs on main advantages and possibilities of GPP. Related to that there is a leaflet on environmental labels in the Czech Republic (“Environmentální značení”). Leaflet Green Office (“Zelený úřad”) informs on the main principles of running an environmentally friendly office and leaflet Green Hotel and Camping (“Zelený hotel a kemp”) on environmentally friendly products in hotels, which also lists hotels carrying out the Czech Ecolabel.

Promotion of the green procurement is currently supported by Ministry of Environment and Czech environmental information agency - CENIA. The Czech Ecolabelling Agency, one of the units of CENIA, is the body responsible for the Czech National Eco-labelling Programme. As of 2012, the eco-labelling in the Czech Republic covered some 68 categories of products and services. However, Ecolabels have been granted in about 24 categories, covering 220 products and services in May 2012. Most frequently, the Ecolabel covers furniture, cleaning products or gas boilers.

CENIA together with the Ministry of Environment run the webpage devoted to green public procurement – [www.zelenenakupovani.cz](http://www.zelenenakupovani.cz). It contains the above mentioned Guidelines and Methods for green public procurement of furniture and IT equipment. Both the requirements for IT equipment and furniture follow the EC Toolkit criteria, even though not totally (e.g. the method for IT equipment does not contain the requirement for packaging).

Overall, the report by Centre for European Policy Studies concludes that in the “ten product categories covered by the study, Czech authorities included at least one of the EU core green criteria in 26% of the contracts and 5% of the contracts included all the relevant EU core green criteria”. This ranks the Czech Republic among the worst performers in those indicators. Similarly, in terms of monetary volume, “21% of all the contracts signed in 2009 and 2010 included some form of green requirement”<sup>2</sup>.

The approach in the Czech Republic seems to be rather bottom-up, therefore good practice examples of municipalities taking up GPP practices occur. A list of those is available for instance at <http://www.veronica.cz/?id=512>. However, the GPP practices mostly cover buying efficient lighting, IT equipment with Energy Star or recycling. The practice however do not seem to cover systemic approach to GPP.

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<sup>2</sup> See note 1.

## Recognised barriers

As including of the environmental criteria as a part of the procurement requirements is mostly not compulsory, but only recommended, there is a lack of motivation by the responsible employees. This is true especially in the situation, where there are lacking capacities at the institutions and organizations to implement environmental criteria as a part of the procurement. The appropriate evaluation tools which would make the evaluation fast and effective are often not available.

## Opportunities

The approved guidelines for the public procurement of office IT equipment and furniture of the central governmental institutions offer a good basis for a start of a process for green procurement implementation in the Czech Republic. This might also influence positively the other public institutions and the private sector.

Good practice examples of Green Public Procurement processes start to emerge among municipalities. This bottom-up approach if enhanced could then initiate further activities at state level.

## Relevant sources of information

### All in Czech

<http://www.zelenenakupovani.cz/>

<http://zeleneuradovani.cz>

[http://zeleneuradovani.cz/pravidla\\_zeleneho\\_nakupovani/](http://zeleneuradovani.cz/pravidla_zeleneho_nakupovani/)

<http://www.ekoznacka.cz>

<http://www.veronica.cz/?id=199>

[http://www.veronica.cz/dokumenty/standardy\\_zeleneho\\_uradovani.pdf](http://www.veronica.cz/dokumenty/standardy_zeleneho_uradovani.pdf)

<http://www.arnika.org/>

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